

AKIRA

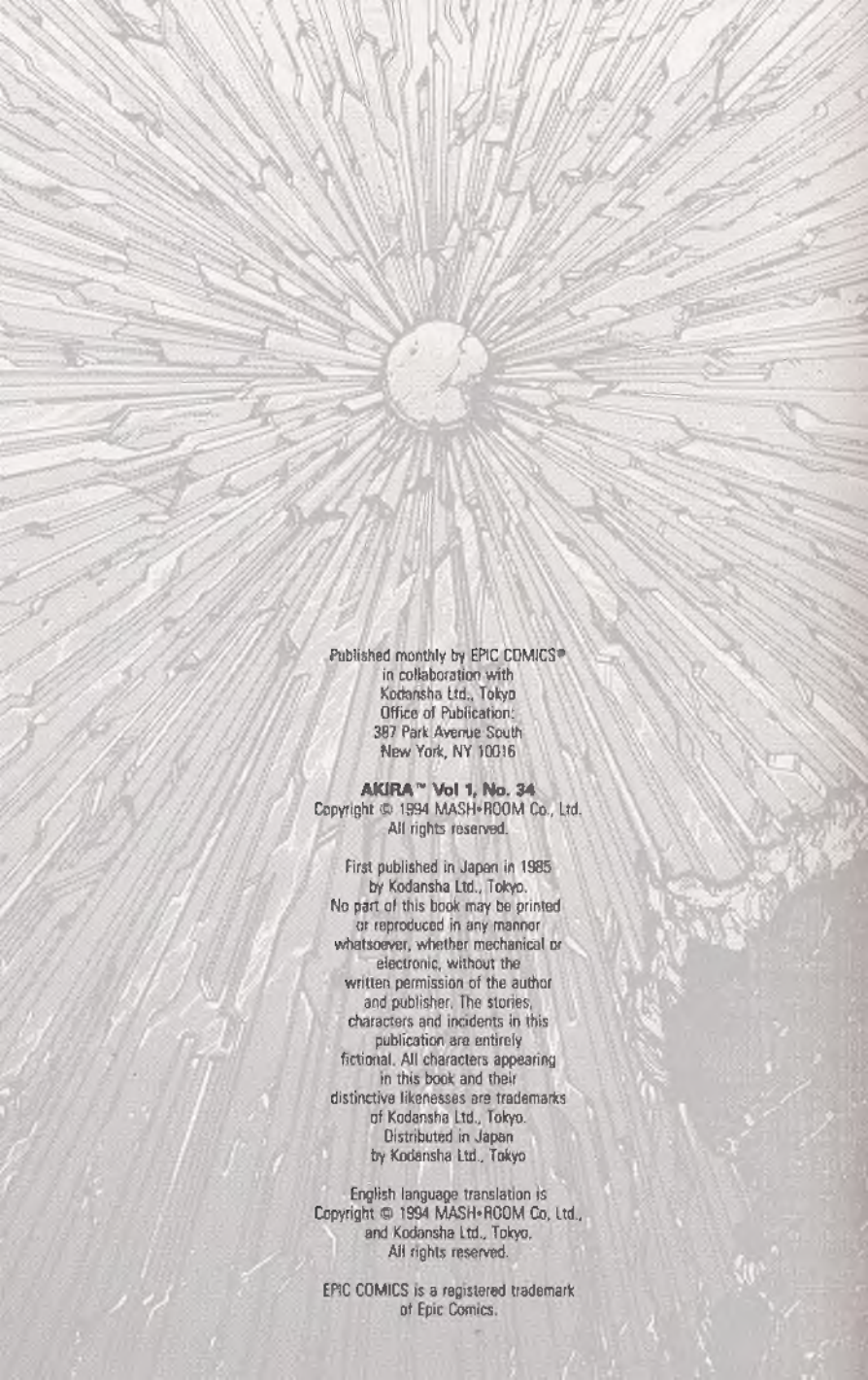
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KATSUHIRO OTOMO



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AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 34

PHANTOM VOICES

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

2030. The world hovers on the brink of World War IV. **Kaneda**, onetime leader of a delinquent gang, is caught up in the aftermath of a power struggle between a Japanese military research organization—led by a man known only as the **Colonel**—and a resistance group whose members included **Kay**, **Ryu**, and a formidable woman named **Chiyoko**.

The **Colonel** had a number of psychic children under his control. Each was identified by a number tattooed on the hand. Among them were **Kiyoko** and **Masaru**—Numbers 25 and 27. The blind **Lady Miyako**—Number 19—was once among their ranks but now heads a great religious cult. Number 41 is **Tet-**

suo, once Kaneda's friend but now his greatest enemy. **Tet-suo** lost his left arm to a laser blast from the Colonel's military satellite SOL, and has used cybernetics and telekinesis to fabricate for himself a prosthetic replacement.

Most powerful of all the children is Number 28—**Akira**—a docile and enigmatic boy who was placed in cryogenic sleep almost 40 years ago, after his mental blast started the Third World War. **Akira** was recently reawakened by **Tetsuo**, and again he devastated the reconstructed city of **Neo-Tokyo**. Japan now exists in a state of emergency. The forces of the army and the resistance are scattered, and the military's formidable "caretaker robots" patrol the streets.

In the western part of **Neo-Tokyo**, the **Great Tokyo Empire** is formed—a monarchy with **Akira** on the throne and **Tetsuo** as his prime minister. Together the pair use their powers, healing the sick, wielding control of the faithful, and organizing their subjects into fighting units to defend their land. Their headquarters is Neo-Tokyo's Olympic Stadium. To the East, **Lady Miyako** welcomes refugees to her shrine. In this, she is



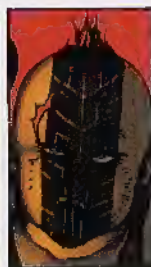
Kaneda



The Colonel



Lady Miyako



Joker



aided by **Kiyoko**, **Masaru**, and a number of loyal, psychic monks.

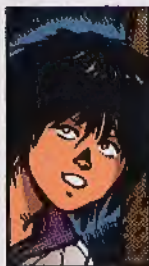
The **Empire** is infiltrated by teams of spies of commando units from the outside world, equipped with biochemical armaments which take a tremendous toll on Tetsuo's forces. A fleet of foreign ships waits in Tokyo Bay, poised for action. Aboard an American naval vessel, an international conclave of scientists and one Tibetan monk study the **Akira** phenomenon—which they've codenamed **Juvenile A**. One of the scientists—**Stanley Simmons**—goes ashore without military authorization, hoping desperately to implement a secret plan.

Meanwhile **Lady Miyako**, **Masaru** and **Kiyoko** convince **Kay** to join them in battle against **Tetsuo**, because **Kay** is a powerful medium, through whom the others can project

their powers and strike as one.

Kaneda, who's teamed up with **Kai** and **Joker**—a friend and a rival from his gang days—vows to kill **Tetsuo** himself rather than let **Kay** face such danger. He, **Kai** and **Joker** launch an assault against **Tetsuo**, using most of their men, as well as such state-of-the-art weapons as they've salvaged, including laser rifles, flying platforms, and one caretaker robot. At the Olympic Stadium, they find destruction and chaos. Their enemy is already under attack by **Kay**, the outside forces, and even disloyal subjects of his own empire.

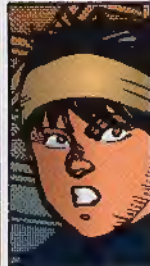
In battle, **Tetsuo** loses control, and his artificial arm assumes a grossly mutated form. He runs amok, killing anyone who comes too close. His power has grown beyond what his body can contain and is now trying to absorb its



Kaori



Kiyoko



Kay



Lt. Yamada



surroundings. His body begins to alternate between a normal human form and an immense, uncontrollable, bloated grotesquerie.

Kaori, the girl **Tetsuo** loves, is murdered by traitors. While **Tetsuo** is mourning her, he and his followers are attacked by the armed infiltrators. **Tetsuo's** supporters die horribly, while **Akira** looks placidly on. **Tetsuo**, shot by the biochem weapons, is enraged, and his enemies, too, die a hideous death.

Ironically, the germs in the weapons affect **Tetsuo** like a drug, enabling him to reassert mastery over his powers. A duel in the stadium ensues, with **Kay** and **Kaneda** using lasers and telekinesis against him. The fight goes on and on, with the advantage shifting time and again. **Kaneda** sends **Kai** to safety with **Akira**, and **Kai** hands the boy over to

another gang member, hoping to find **Joker** and return to the fray.

Then, the international fleet in the harbor sends fighter planes to rain death upon **Neo-Tokyo** causing chaos among all the combatants. **Akira** slips away from his guardians and rejoins **Kaneda** in the stadium, saying that he's been called by a power from above. The power is an orbiting laser cannon which the admiral of the fleet has ordered fired at the stadium. The laser pauses to recharge just before firing at **Tetsuo**, and **Tetsuo** transports himself to space, seizing control of the weapon.

Before the ships can be evacuated, **Tetsuo** fires the cannon at the fleet. For a finale, he brings the entire satellite crashing down upon the bridge of the flagship where the admiral commands.



Chiyoko



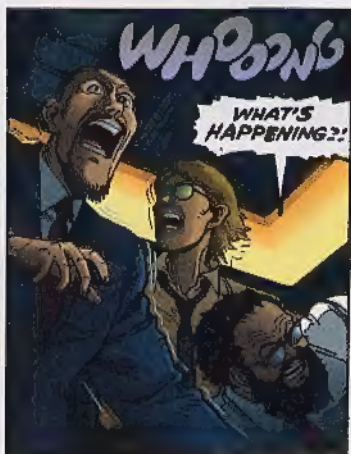
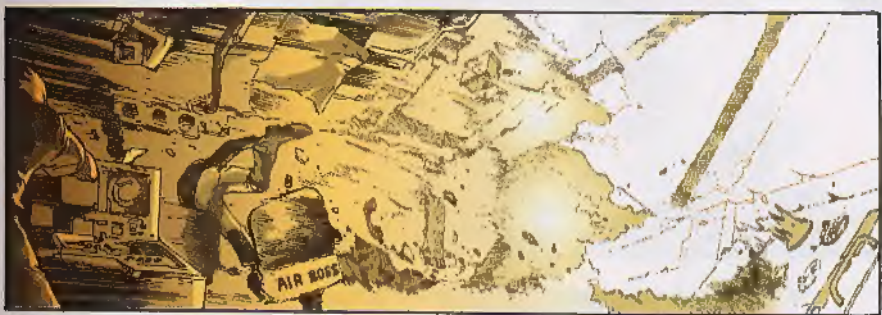
Tetsuo

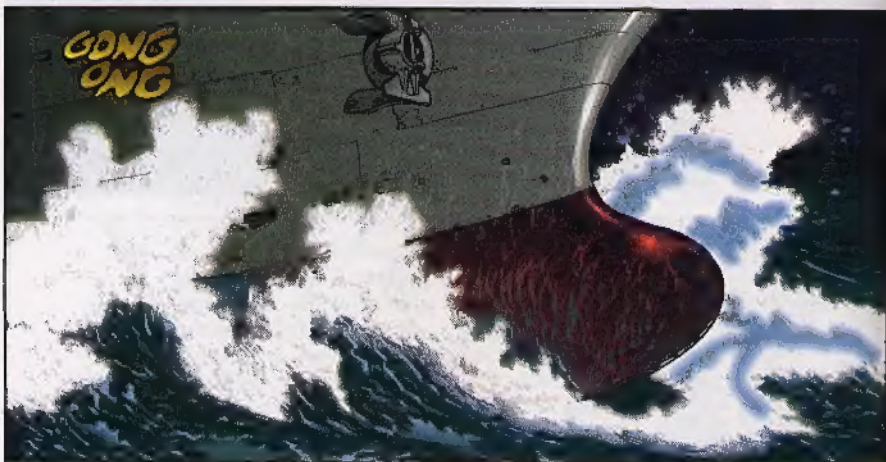


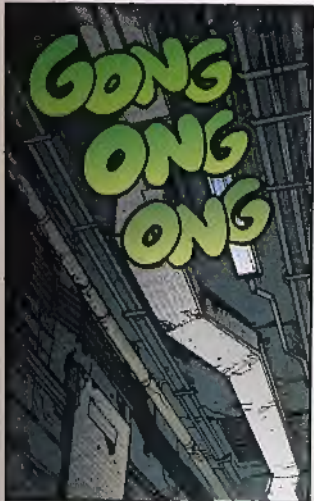
Masaru

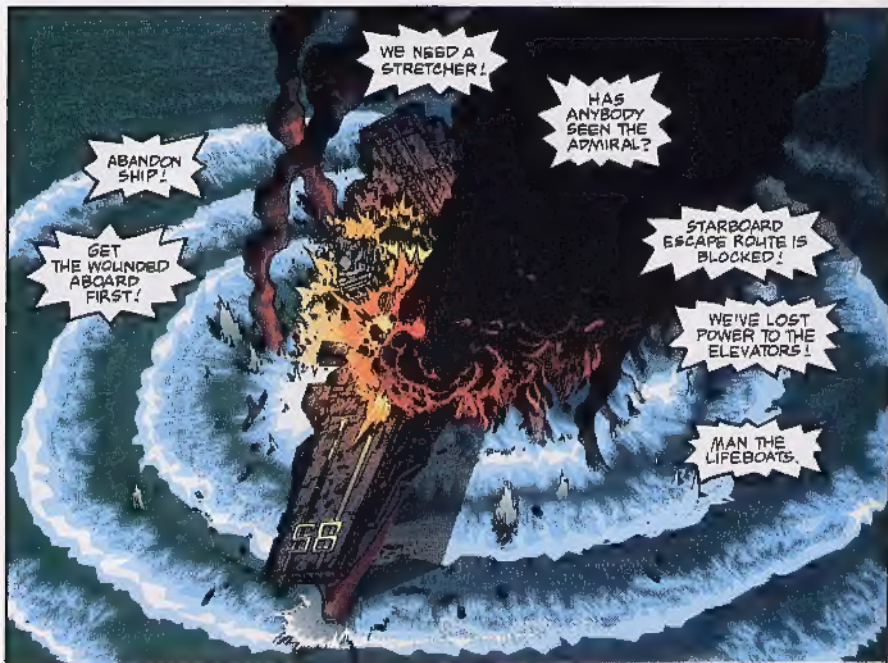


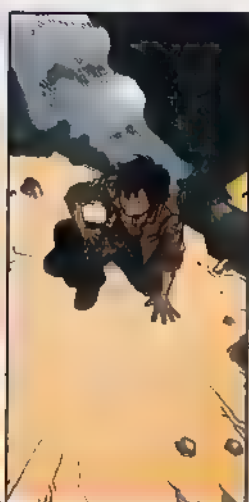
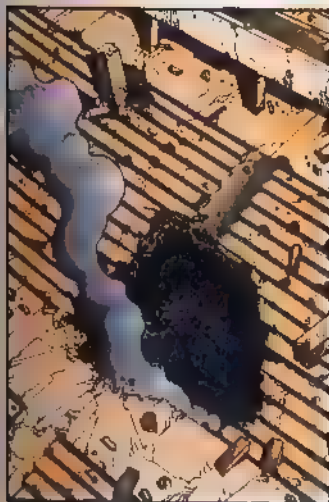
Akira

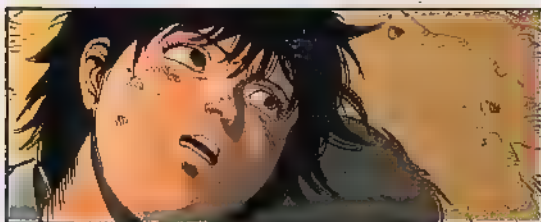
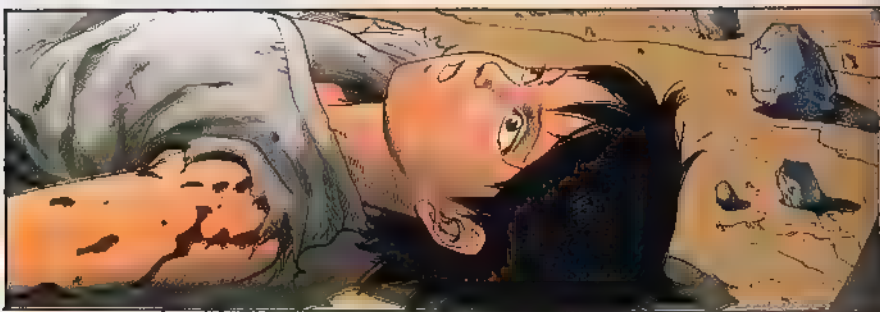
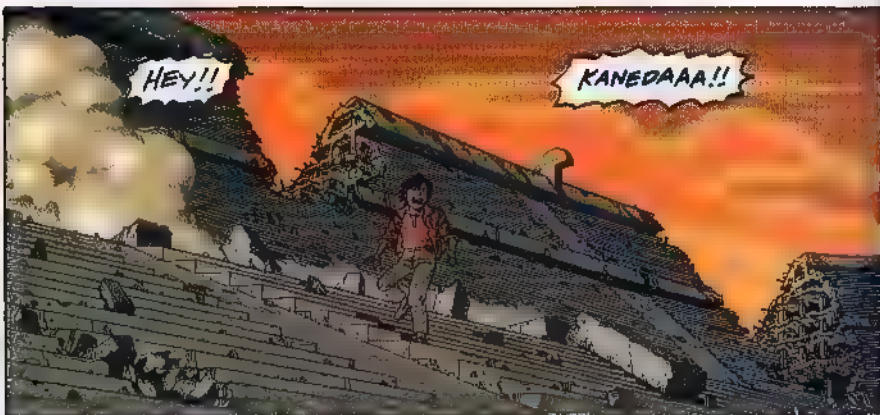












DID YOU--?!

THEY HAVE
DECODED THE
SEAL ON SOL.

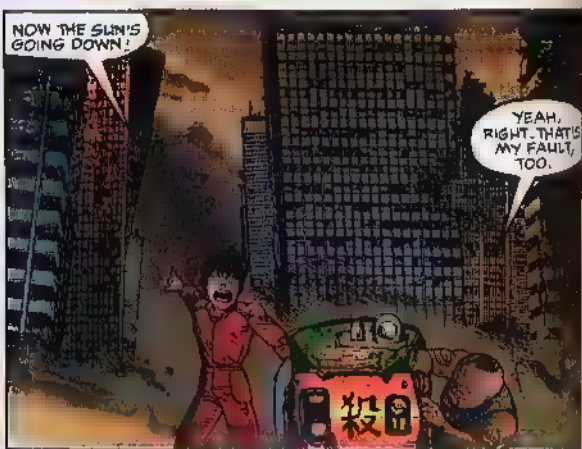
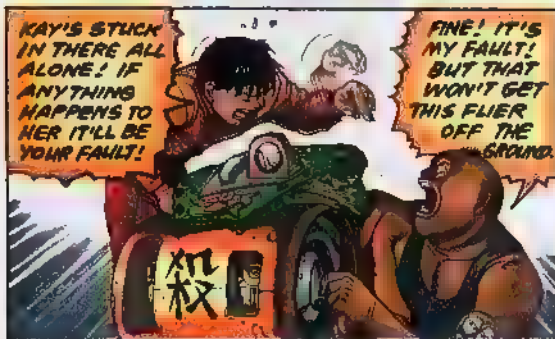
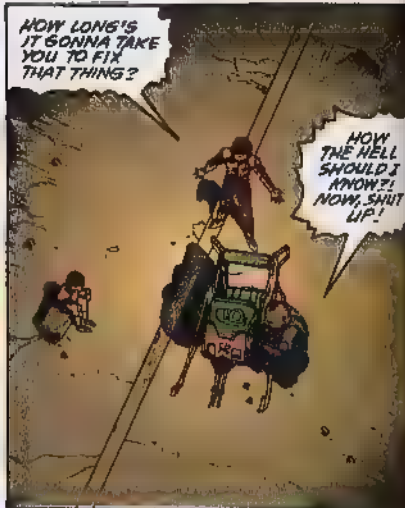
I GAVE YOU
WHAT AID I
COULD.

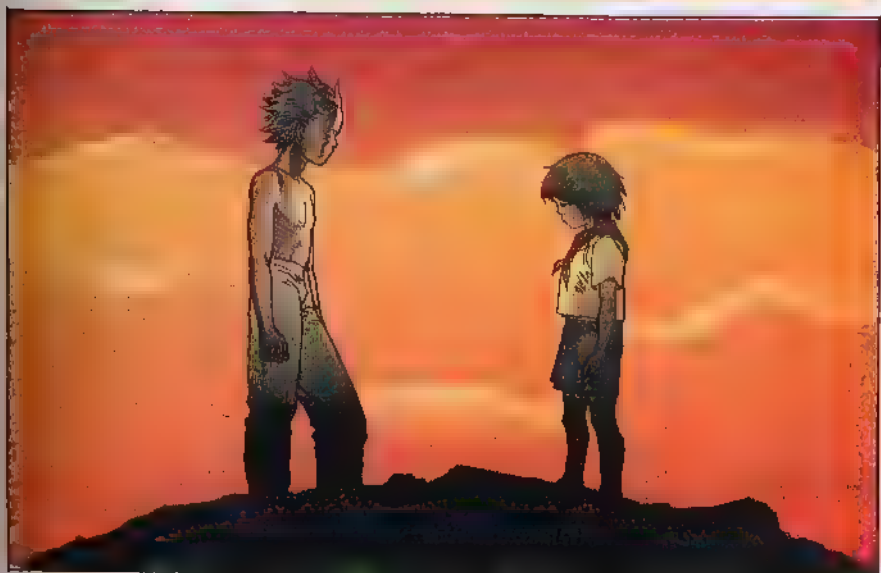
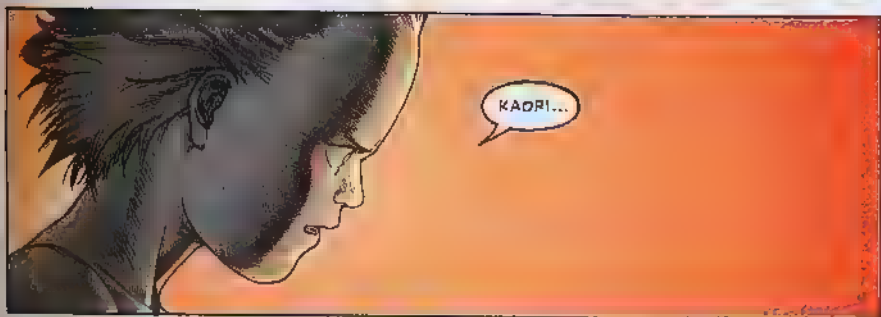
AS YOU CAN
SEE, MY OWN
LEGS ARE...

I BELIEVED WE TWO-
OLD ENEMIES-- WOULD
PERISH TOGETHER... AND
THEN, THE ATTACK
STOPPED.

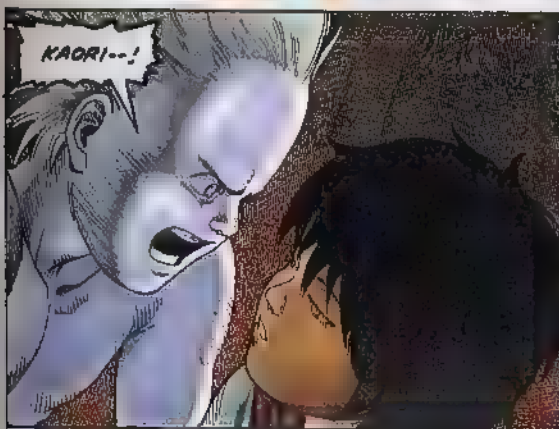
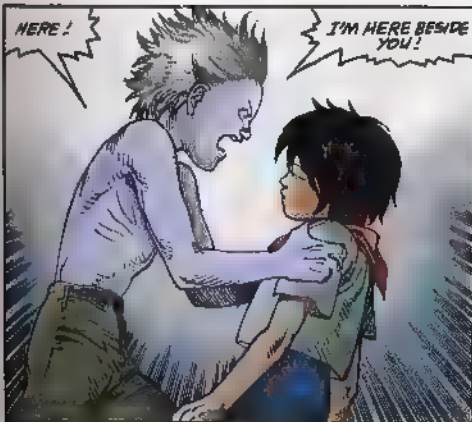
OHH--!

KANEDAAA--!







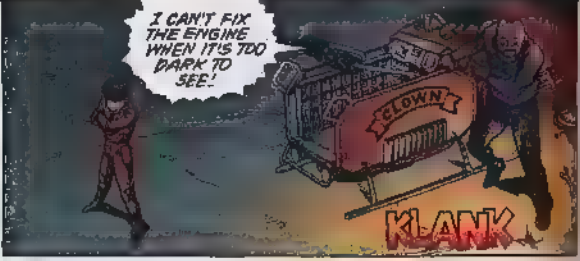




OH, KAORI...



DAMMIT!



I CAN'T FIX
THE ENGINE
WHEN IT'S TOO
DARK TO
SEE!

KLANK



TROUBLE
IS, YOU PUT TOO
MUCH FAITH IN
MACHINES.



I'M TIRED OF
WAITING!



YOU
MEAN...

...YOU'RE
GOING
IN UN-
ARMED
?!



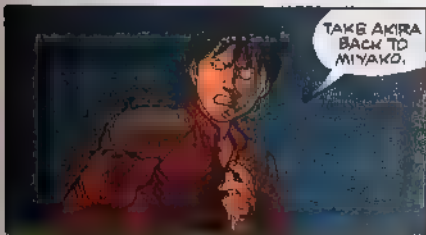
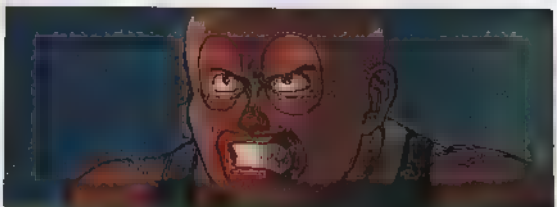
THE MORE THAT
BASTARD'S POWER
GROWS...

...THE LESS
CONTROL HE'S
GOT OVER THE
SMALL
STUFF.



BEST TIME
TO STRIKE...

... IS NOW THAT
HE CAN'T DO ANY-
THING SUBTLE.



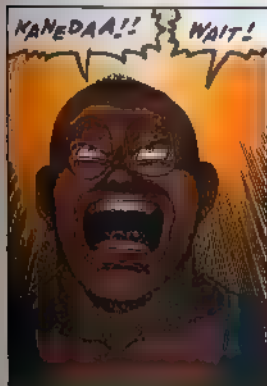
TAKE AKIRA
BACK TO
MIYAKO.



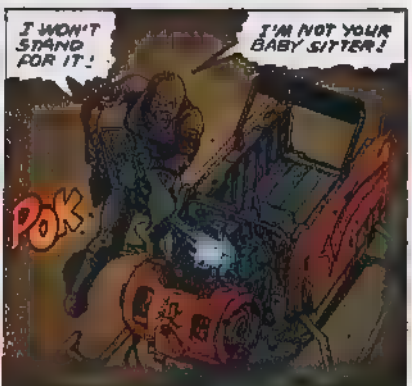
SO
YOU CAN BE
A BIG SHOT
HERO.



I TOLD YOU, JOKER, THIS
IS PERSONAL BETWEEN
TETSUO AND ME.



KANEDAA!! WAIT!

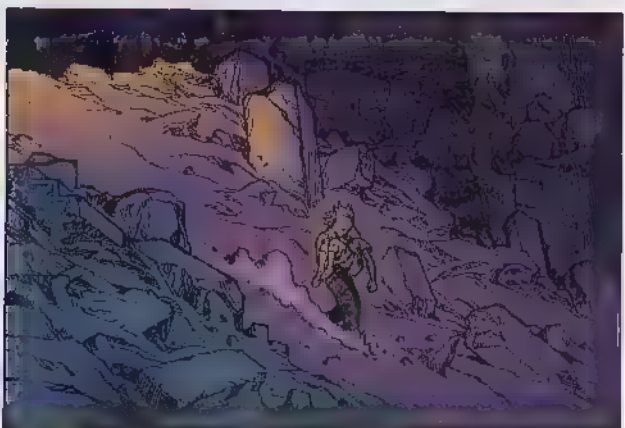
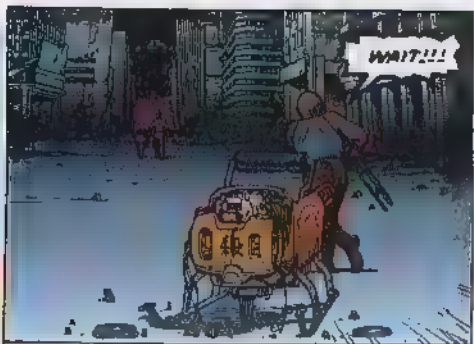
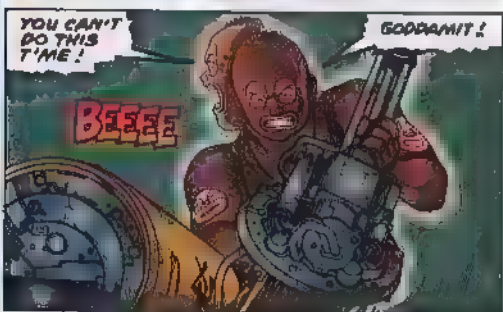
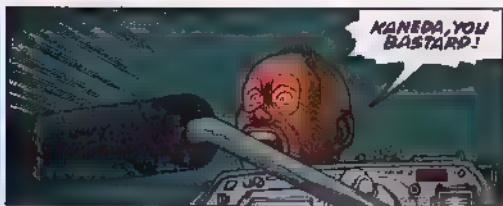


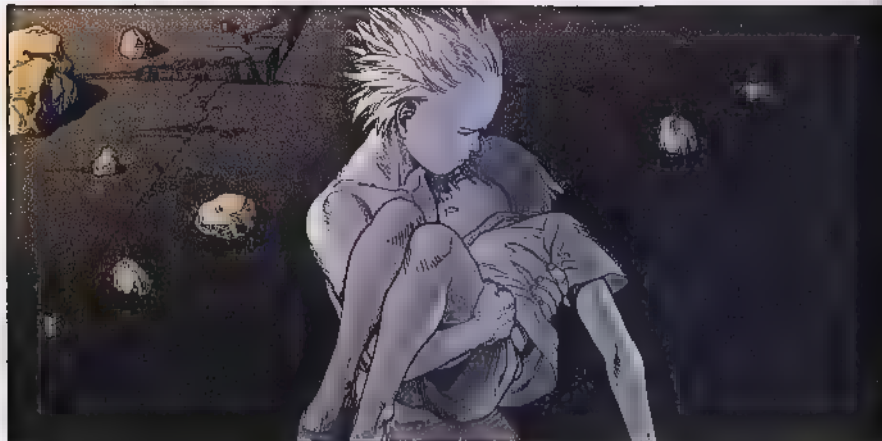
I WON'T
STAND
FOR IT!

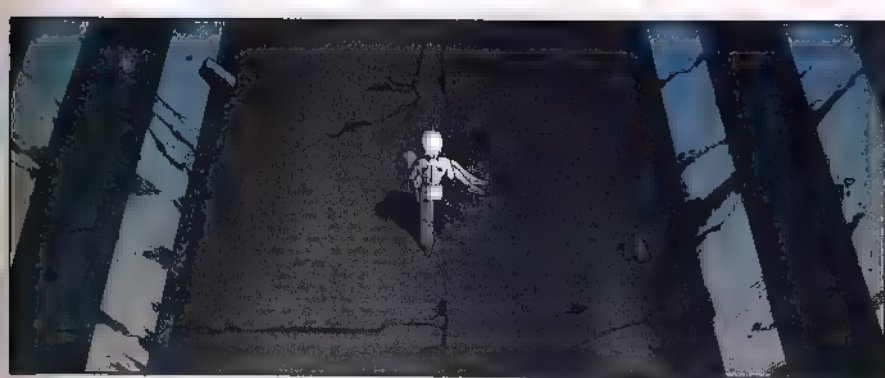
I'M NOT YOUR
BABY SITTER!

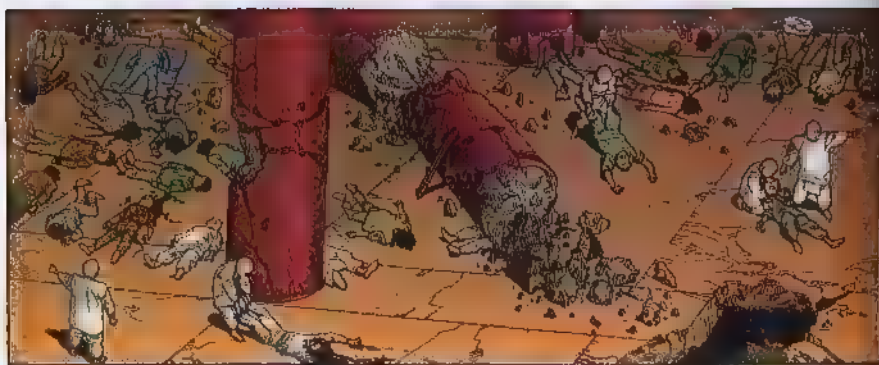
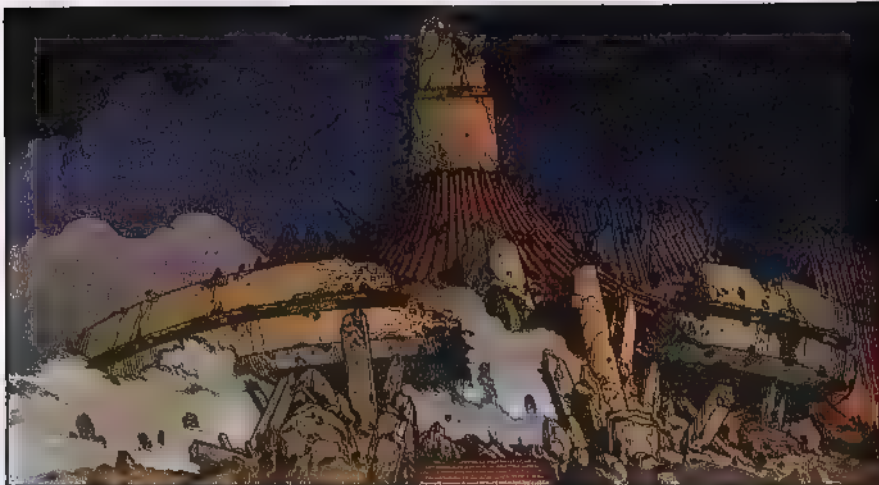
POK.











COME QUICKLY!

NEVER MIND
THE DEAD! IT'S THE
SURVIVORS WHO'LL
BENEFIT FROM OUR
AID!

HERE
SHE
COMES.

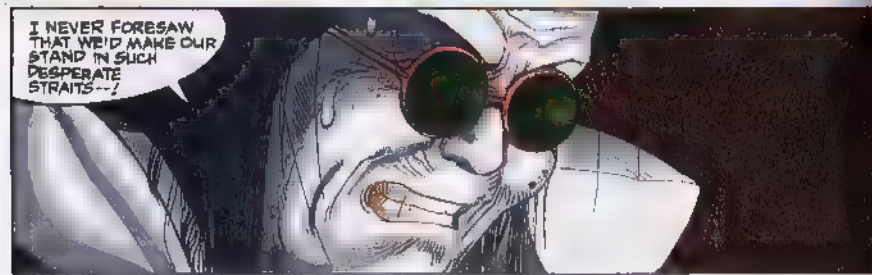
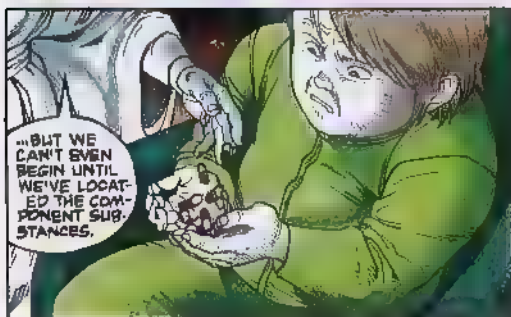
HOW IS
KIYOKO?

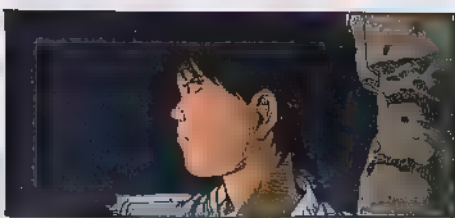
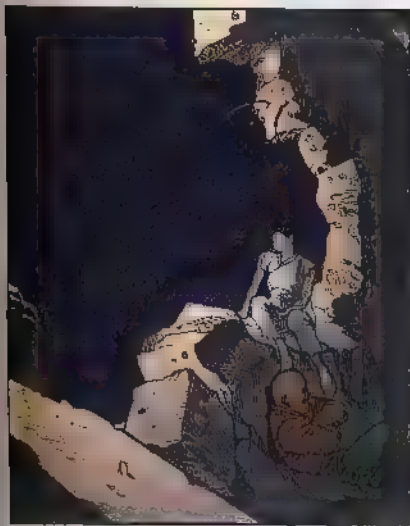
I NEED... A
PILL...

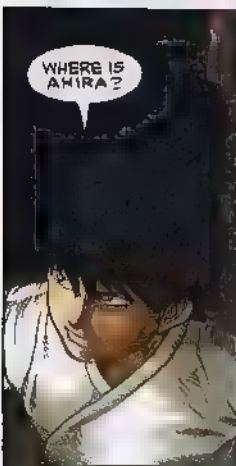
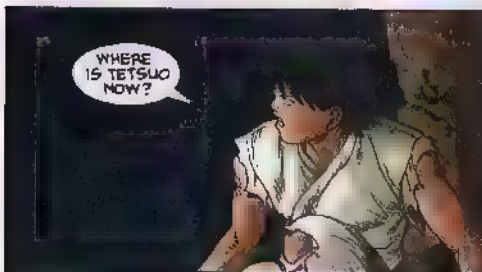
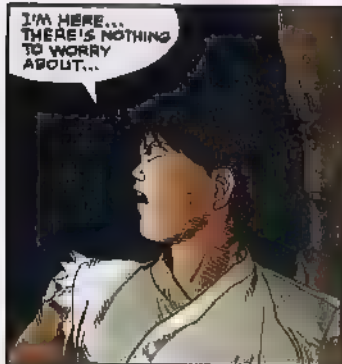
I... SEE.

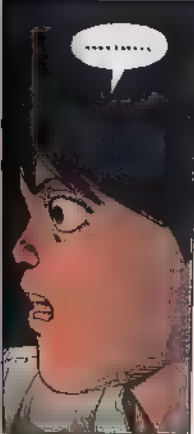
OUR STORES WERE
DESTROYED.

THESE ARE ALL I
HAVE LEFT.





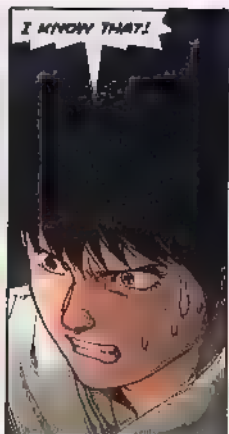
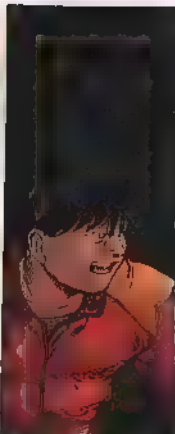




WWW...WWW...



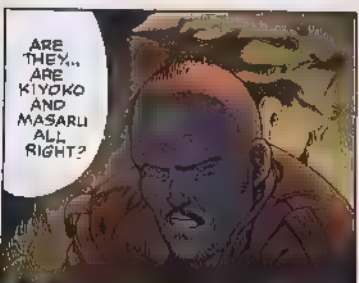
WHOEVER IS THERE,
WHEN THE TIME
COMES, YOU
MUST STRIKE!



I KNOW THAT!



SO... YOU
HAVE THE
GIFT AS
WELL...



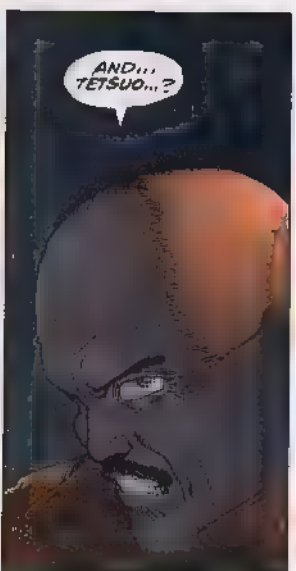
ARE
THEY...
ARE
KIYOKO
AND
MASARU
ALL
RIGHT?



THEY'RE
FINE.



WHAT ABOUT
AKIRA?



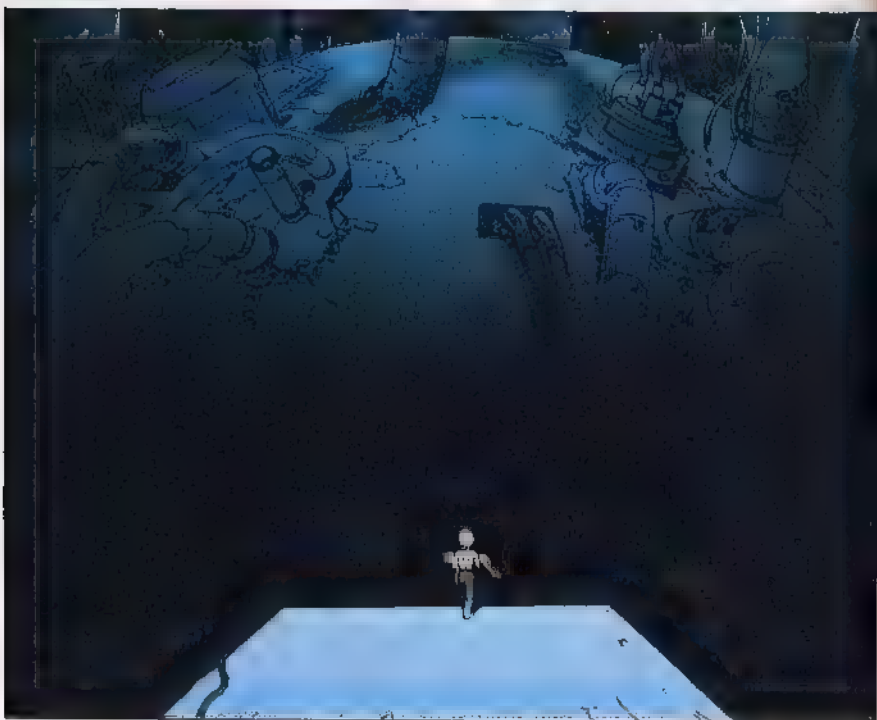
AND...
TETSUO...?



SO FAR, HIS
POWERS ARE
STABLE.

TETSUO...

...IS...





AT
LEAST TELL ME
WHO'S CALLING
YOU!

HOW'RE
THEY CALLING? CAN
YOU HEAR RADIO
WAVES?



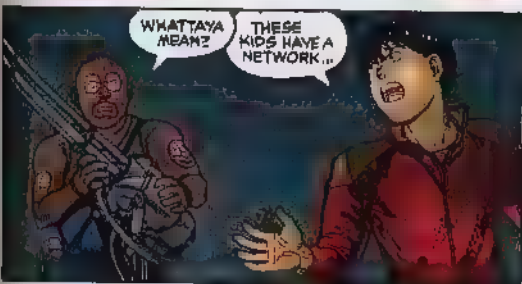
CAN YOU
BELIEVE
THIS?



AFTER ALL WE'VE
BEEN THROUGH, THIS
KID'S SO UN-
SOCIAL!



Y'KNOW... MAYBE
THEY'RE ALL
LINKED BY
STRING AND
PAPER CLIPS...



WHATTAYA
MEAN?

THESE
KIDS HAVE A
NETWORK...



LIKE SOME
KIND OF
MUTANT
CB...

THAT'S A LOW
CLASS, RETRO
WAY OF PUTTING
IT.



THE WAY THEY'RE
ALL TUNED IN
TO EACH
OTHER.

EACH ONE ALWAYS
SEEMS TO KNOW WHAT
THE OTHERS ARE
DOING.

HEY, RADIO'S
MORE SCIENTIFIC
THAN A TOY
TELEPHONE

THERE'RE SOME
DISCOVERIES
SCIENCE ISN'T
UP ON.

HUNH?

SOMEONE'S
COMING!

CLICK
CLICK

HOLD IT!

HMM?

CHIYOKO!



KANEKA...!?



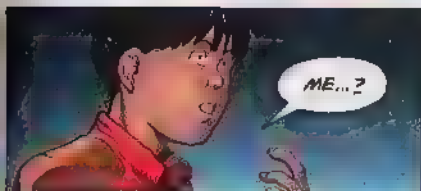
ARE
YOU
FEELING
BETTER
?

COMPLETE-
LY.

I
CAME
TO
LOOK
AFTER
YOU.



ME...?



THAT'S STUPID! KAY'S
THE ONE WHO NEEDS
HELP! WE'RE ON
OUR WAY TO SAVE
HER!



YOU TAKE TOO
MANY CHANCES.
KAY WAS
WORRIED.





YOU NEVER
CHANGE...EXCEPT
THAT NOW AKIRA'S
WITH YOU.



MYST
UP!



I'M
TALKIN'
T'YOU!

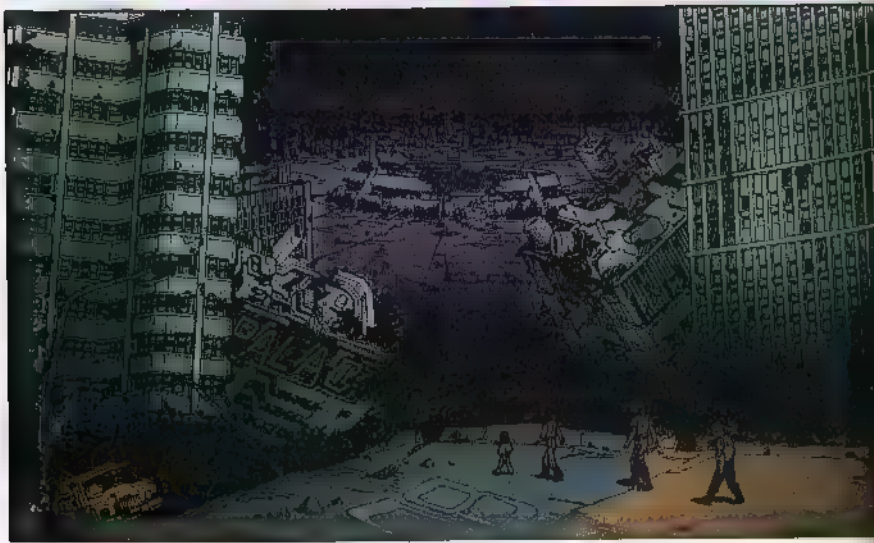


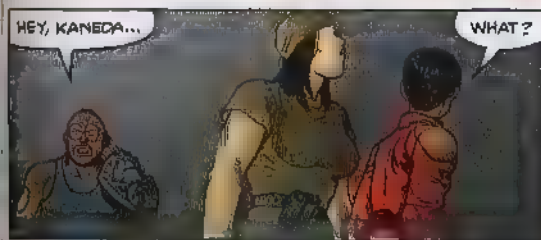
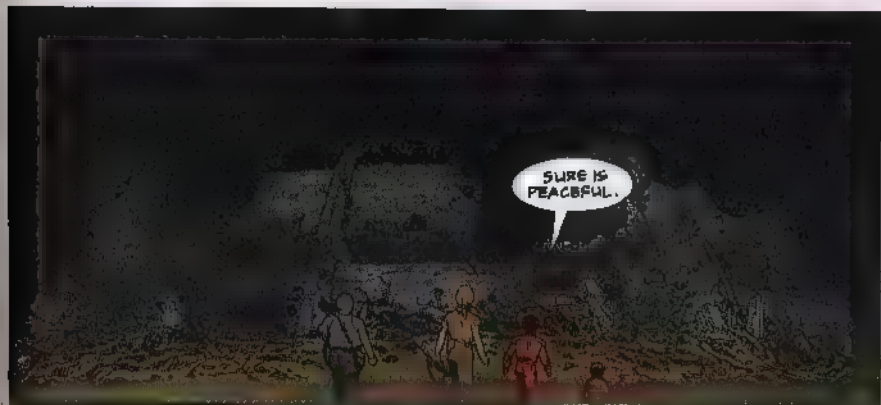
STUPID
KID...

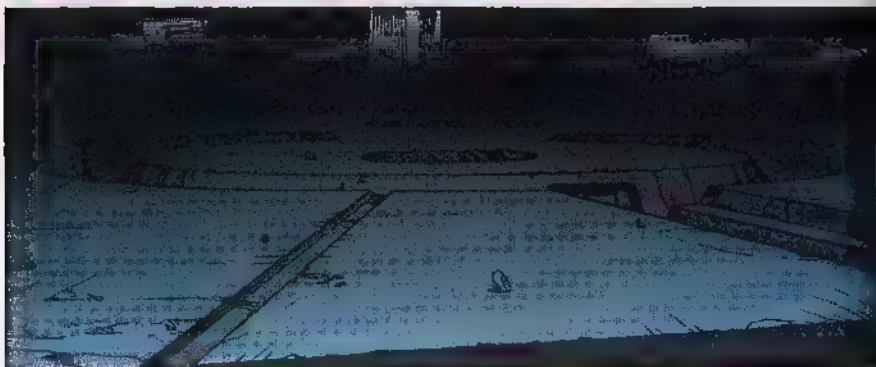
WHERE IS HE
GOING?



I DON'T KNOW
WHERE HE THINKS
HE'S GOING, BUT HE'S
HEADED FOR OUR
DESTINATION.







BUDDA

BUDDA

MOVE AWAY FROM
THE SHIP. WE CAN'T
ACCOMMODATE MORE THAN
ONE BOATLOAD OF
SURVIVORS AT A
TIME.

BRING THE
WOUNDED THIS
WAY.

PROCEED UP THE
LADDER IN AN
ORDERLY FASHION.

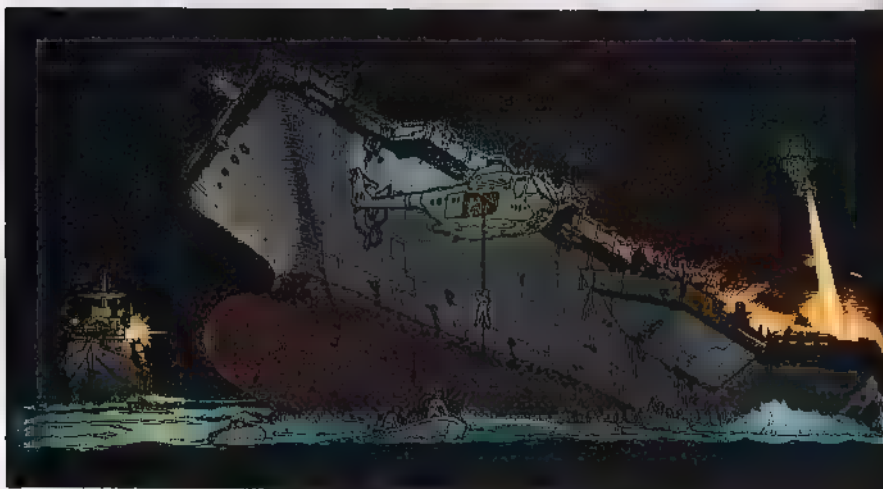
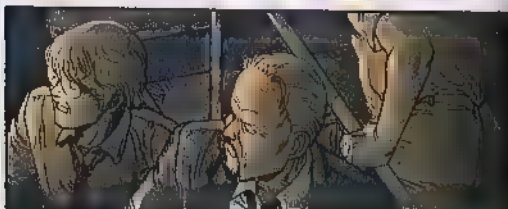
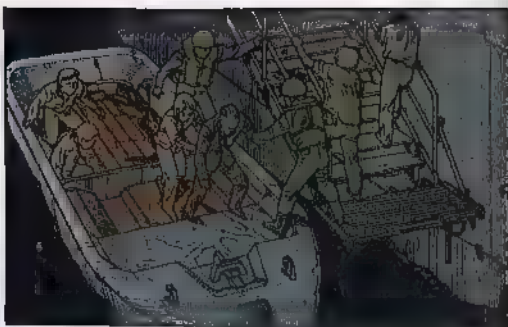
OVER HERE!

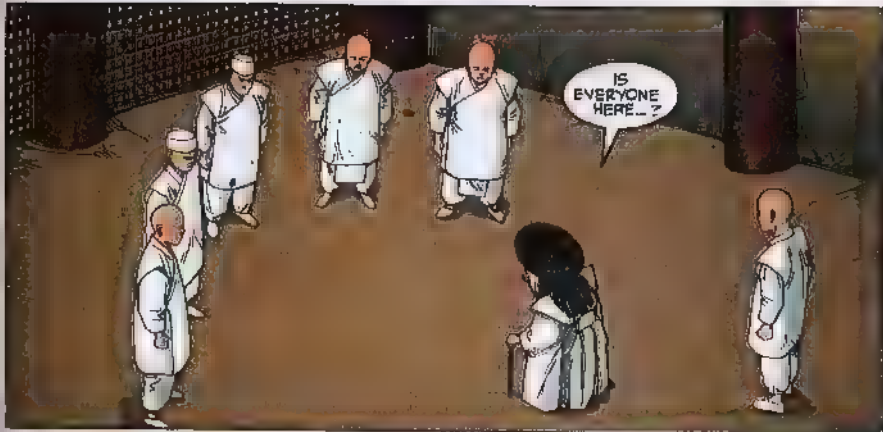


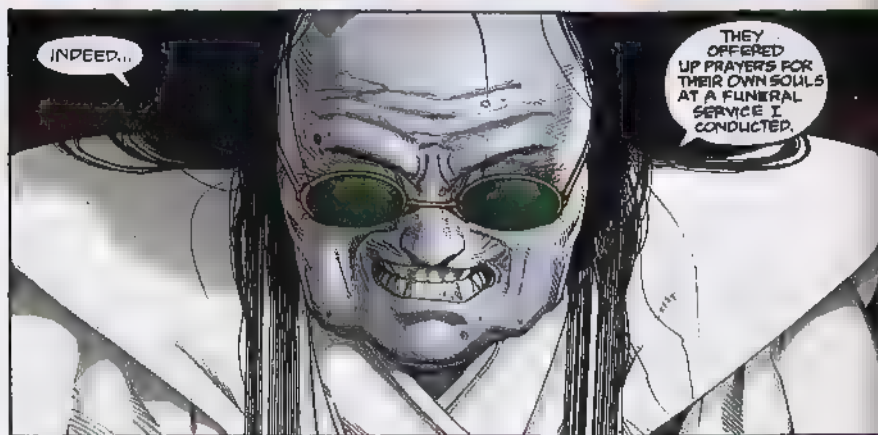
YOU CAN'T
COLLAPSE UP
HERE! MOVE
BELOW DECK!

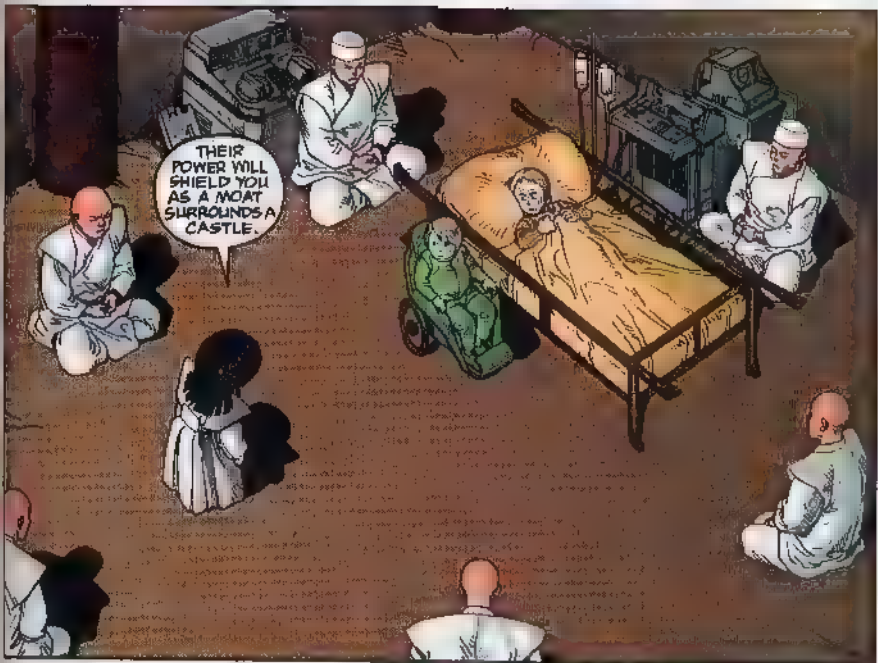
THIS ONE'S
ALREADY
DEAD!

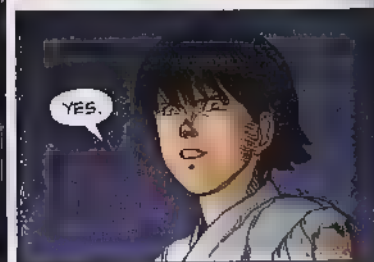
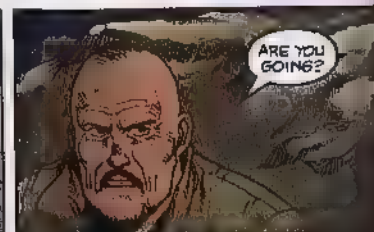
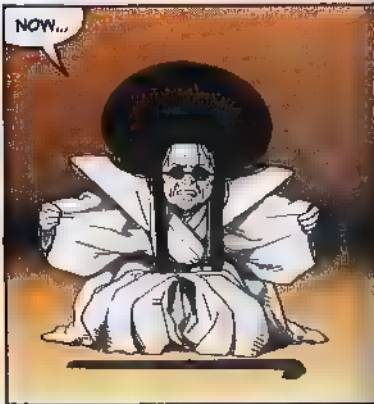
WE NEED
MORE
BLANKETS!

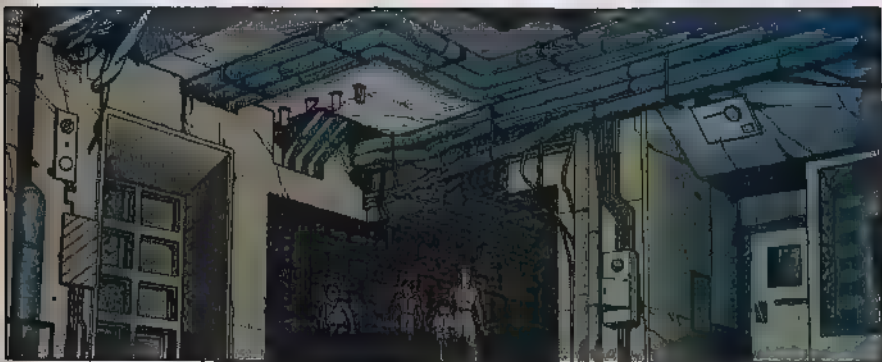


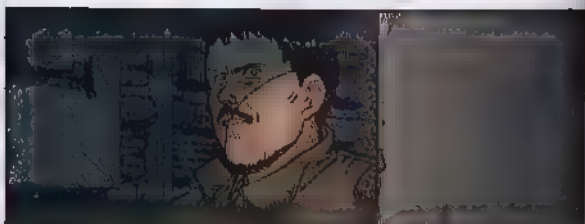
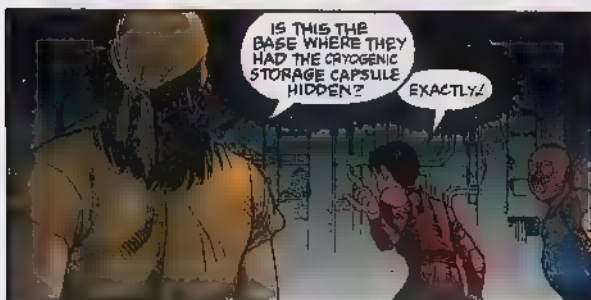
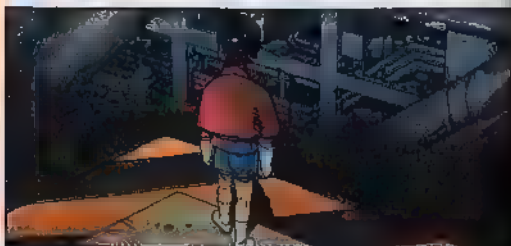
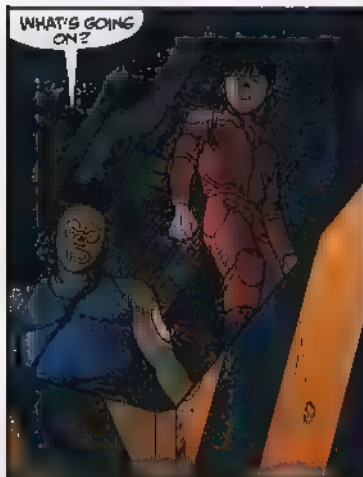


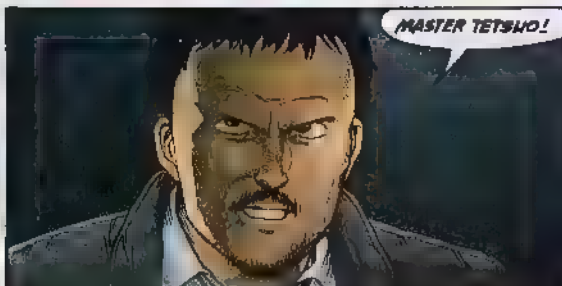
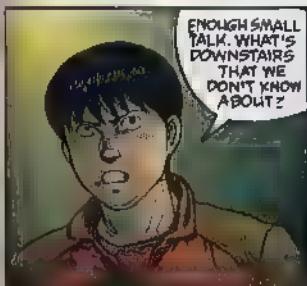


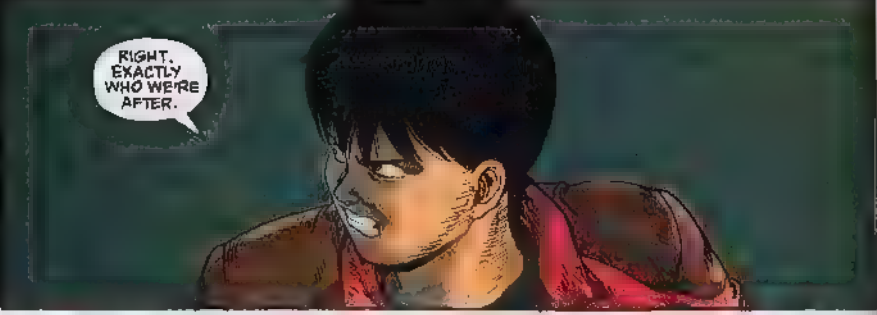












RIGHT.
EXACTLY
WHO WE'RE
AFTER.



HE WAS CARRYING
SOMEONE. A
GIRL.



KAY!!



KAY AND I
AREN'T EXACTLY
STRANGERS.
I'D HAVE
NOTICED.

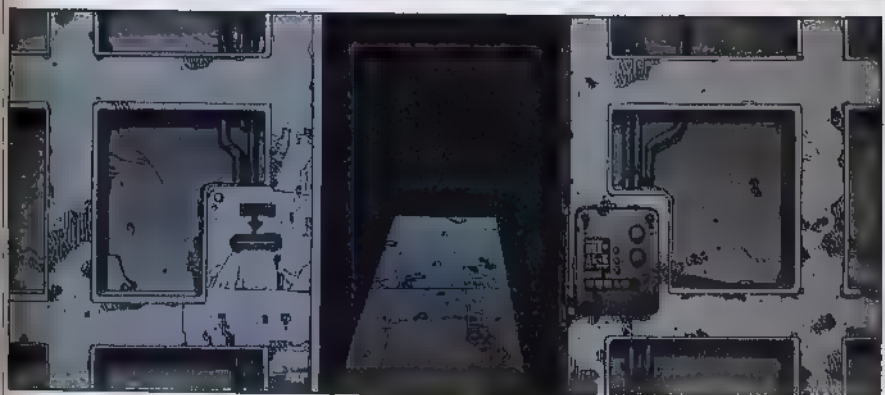
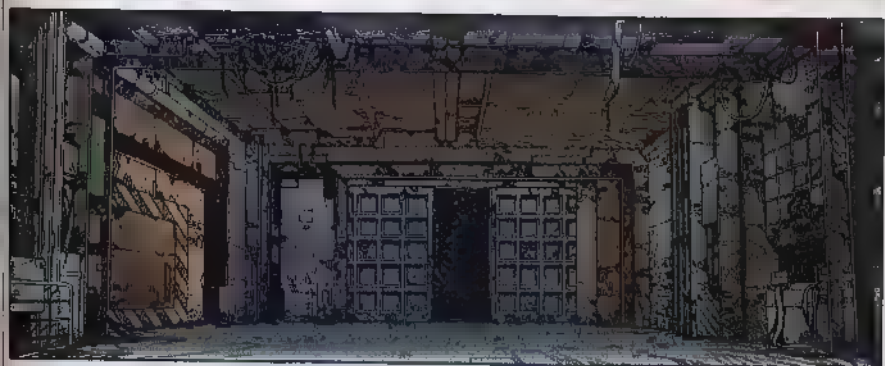
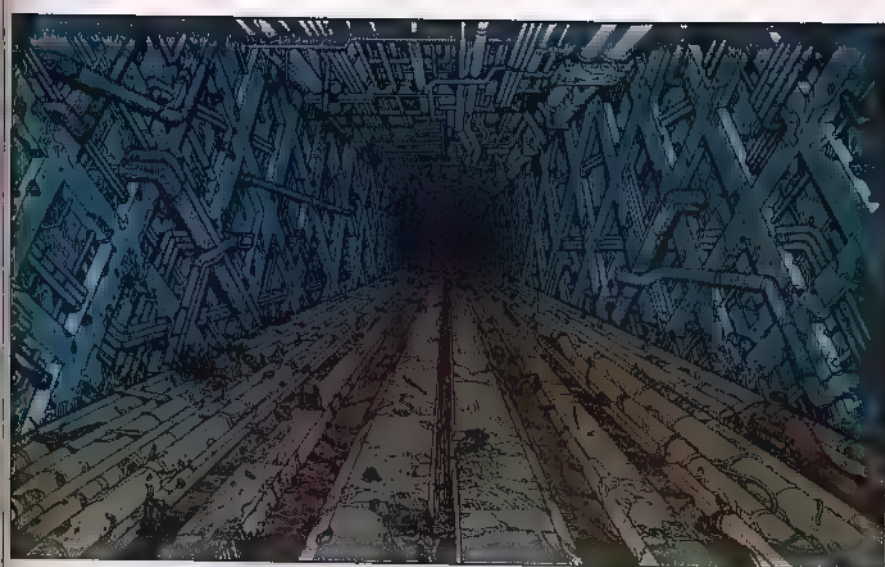
NO. THIS
LOOKED LIKE
THE DAUGHTER
OF SOME
REFUGEE. SHE
MUST HAVE BEEN
TETSUO'S
GIRLFRIEND..

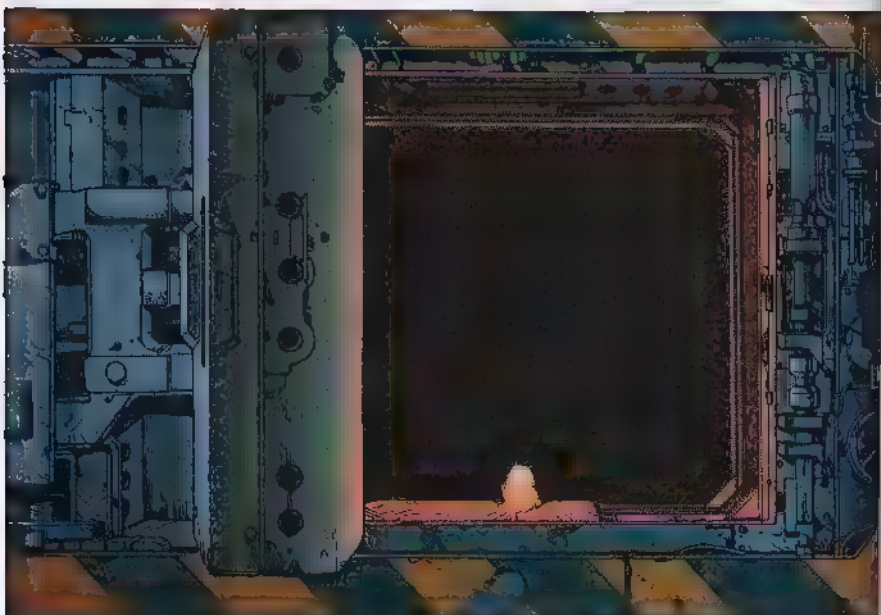
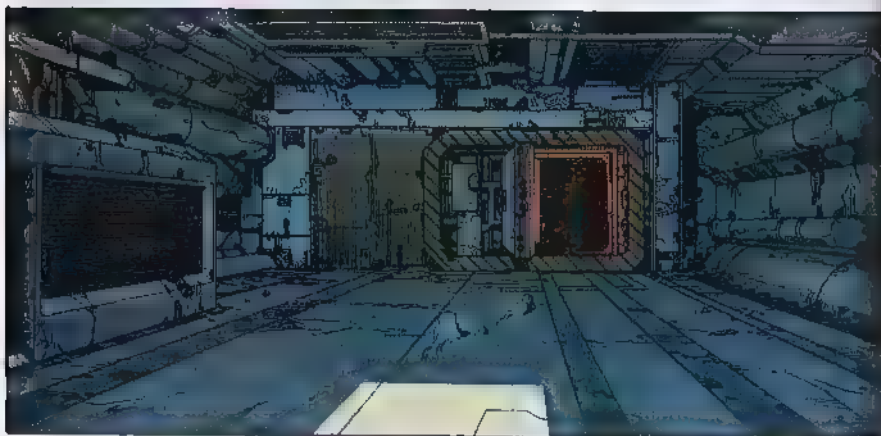
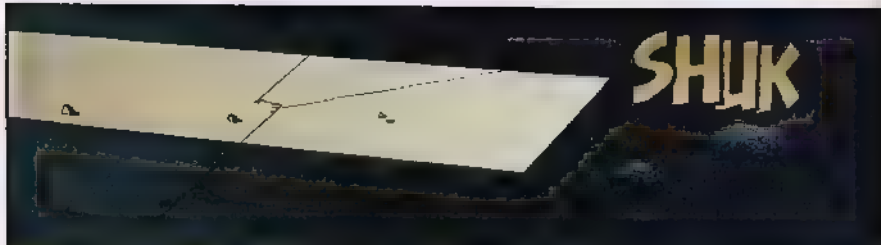


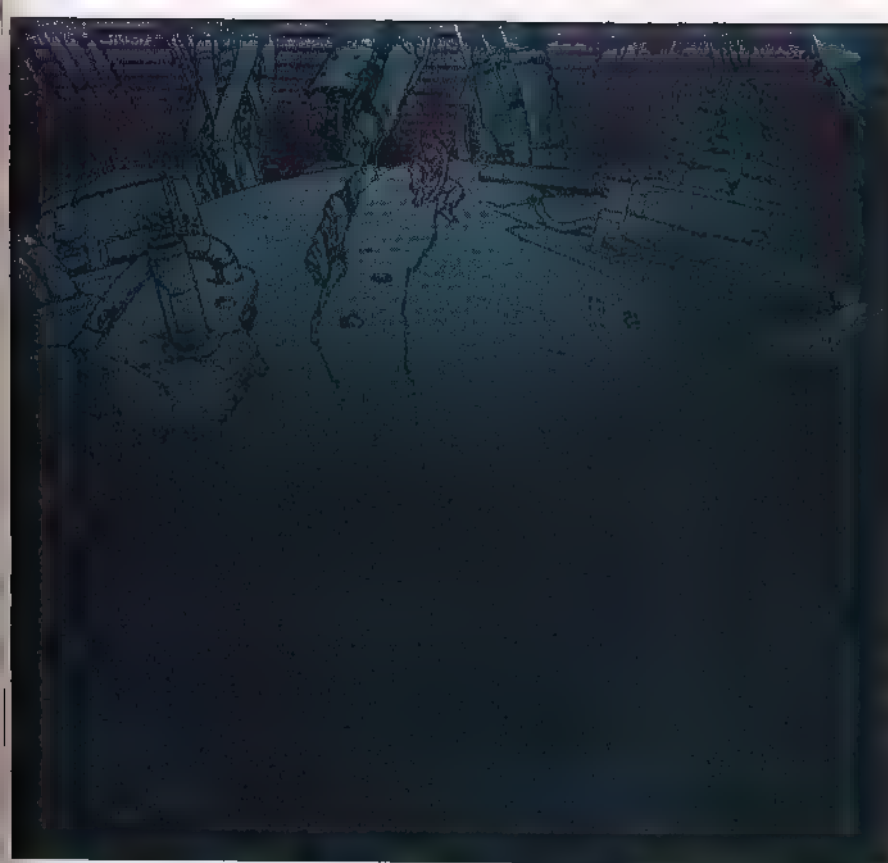
TAKING AKIRA DOWN
THERE MAY BE LIKE JUMPING
INTO A FIRE HOLDING
A LIVE BOMB.

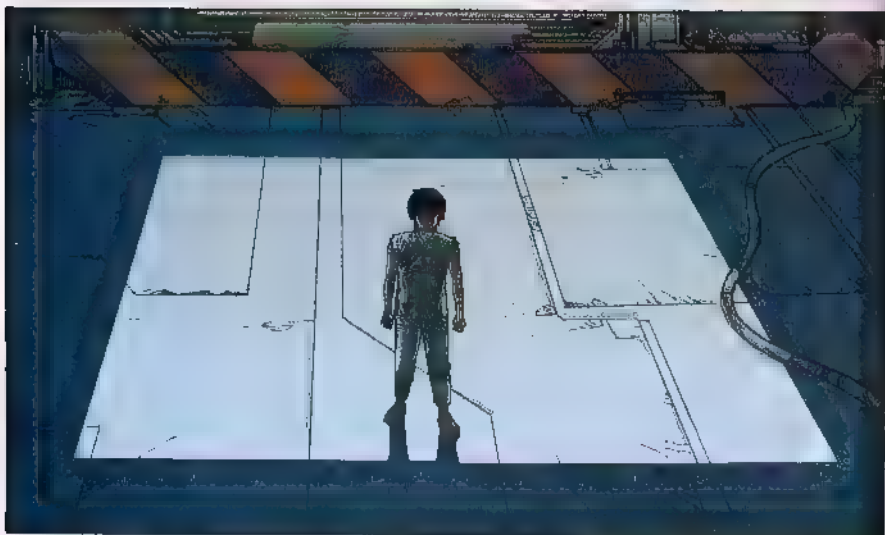
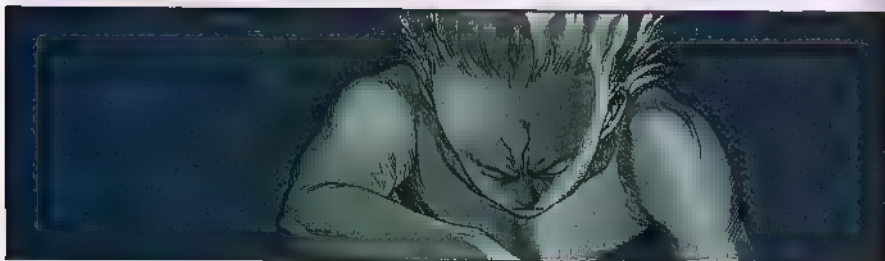
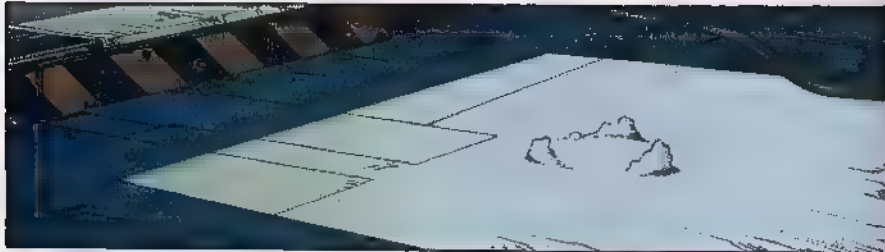


SOMETIMES THE
BEST WAY OF
FIGHTING FIRE IS
WITH A LITTLE HIGH
EXPLOSIVE.

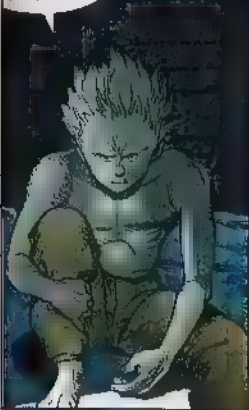




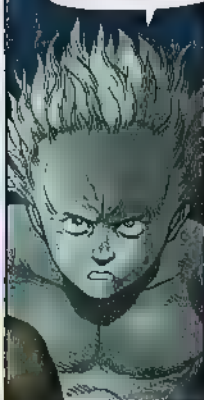




YOU AGAIN.



WHERE'S KAMI-DA?



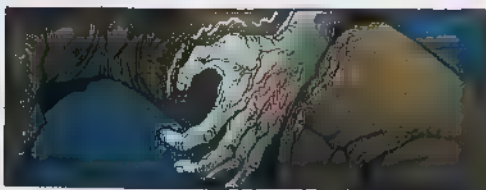
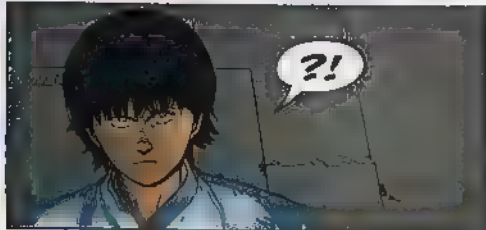
ON
HIS WAY. HE'S
BRINGING
AKIRA,



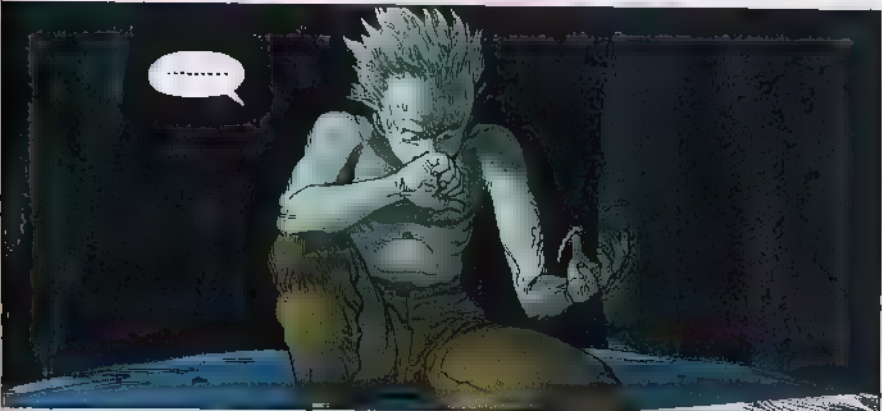
AAH...

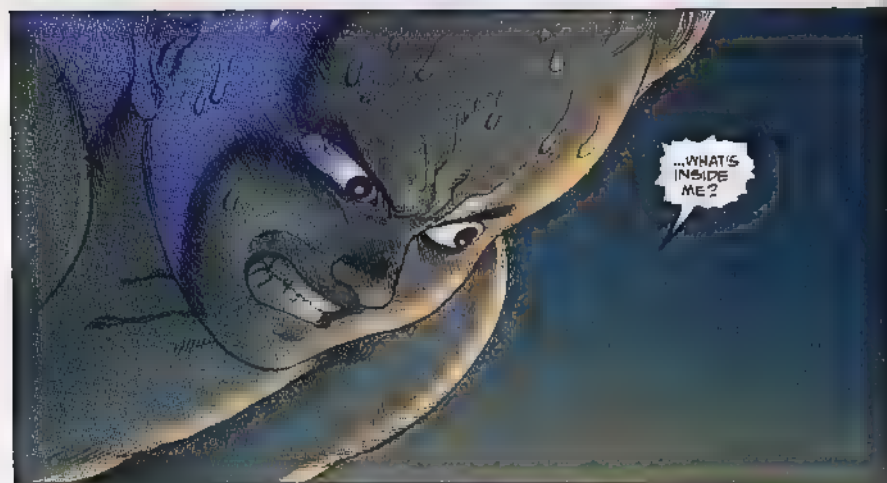
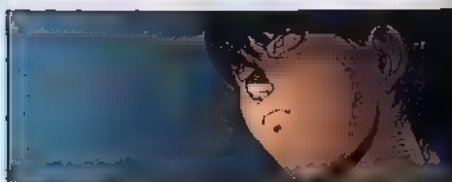


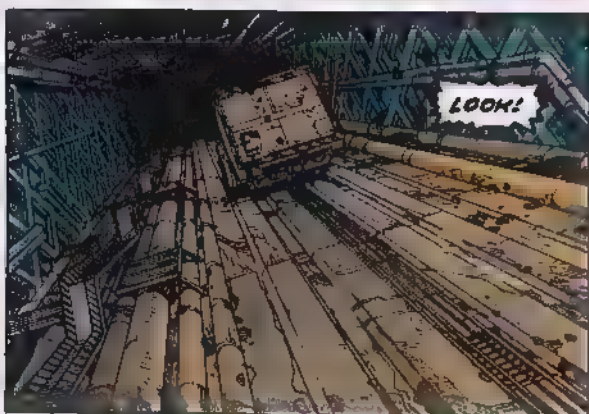
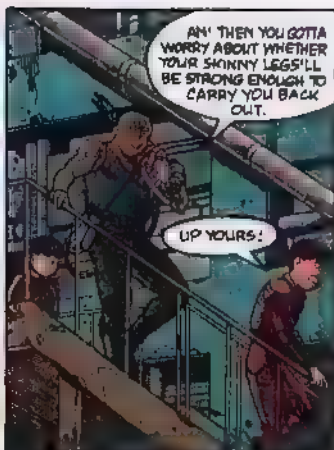
?!

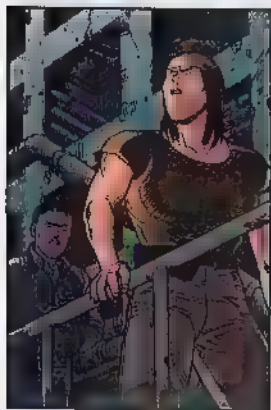
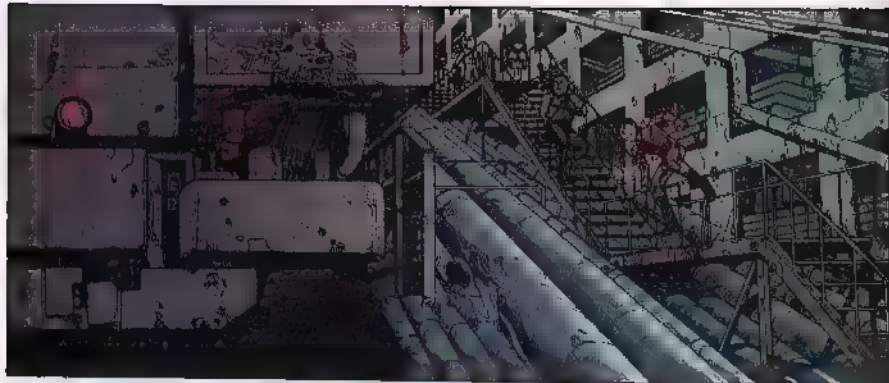


.....









HAHAHAHAHA
HAHAHAHAHA...



YOU
CRACK ME
UP!



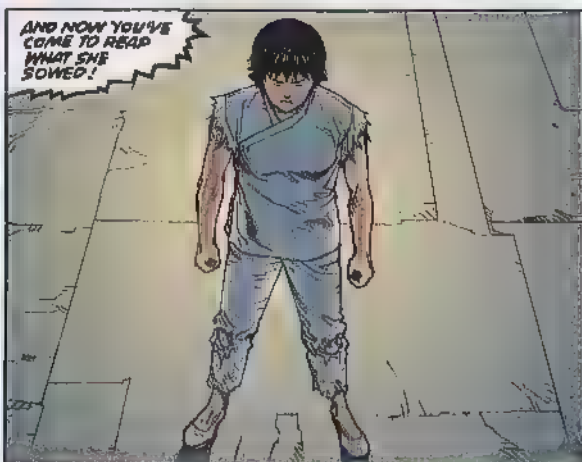
...TELLING
ME IT'S UP
TO ME...



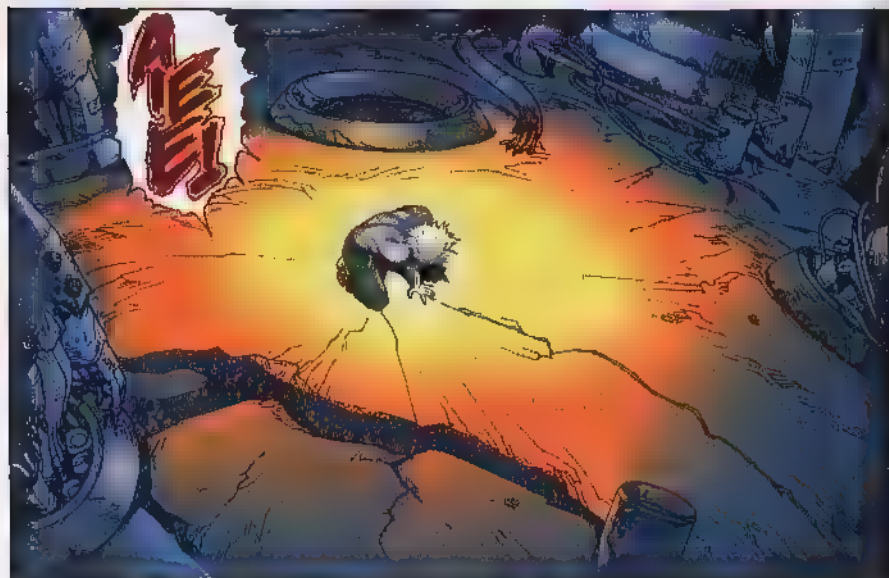
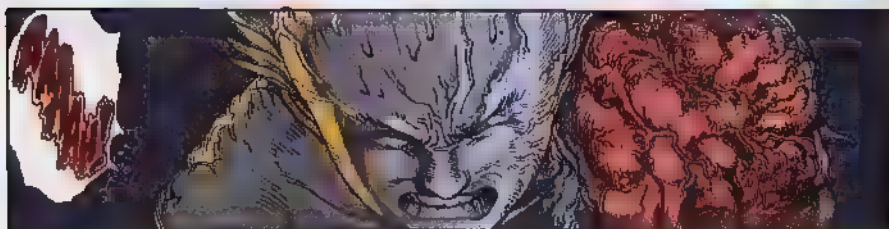
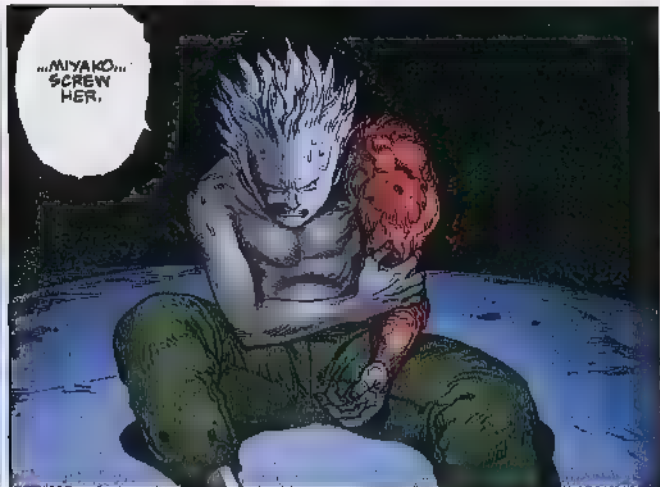
...CONTROL
MYSELF...
CONTROL
AKIRA...

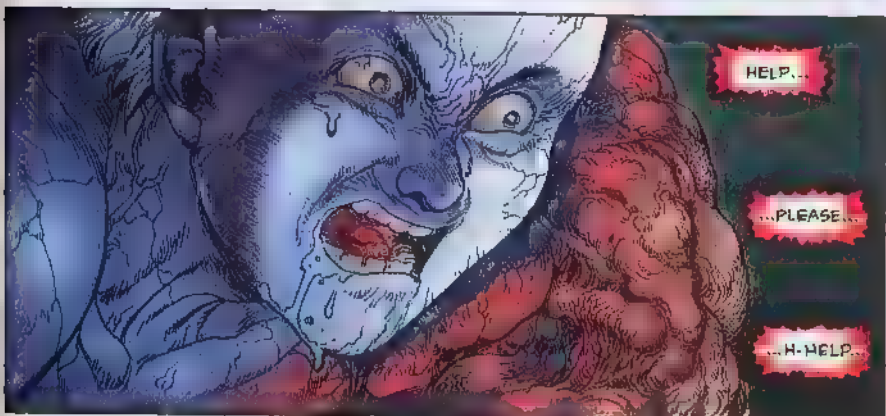


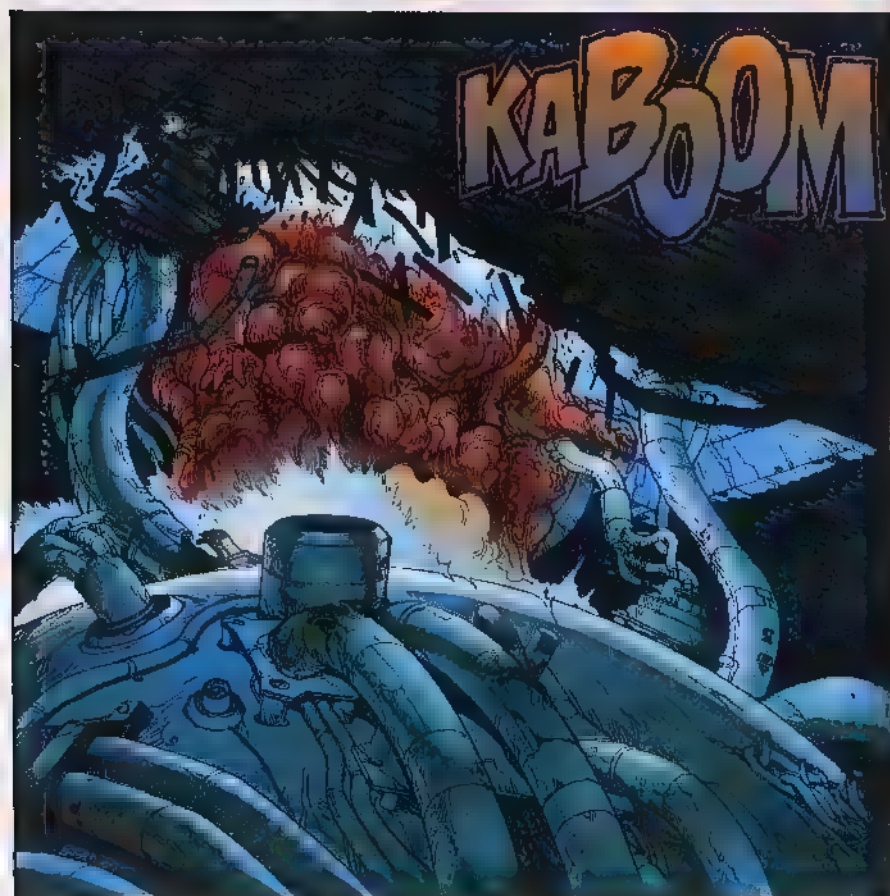
THAT BITCH
SCAMMED
ME! AN' I
FELL FOR
IT!

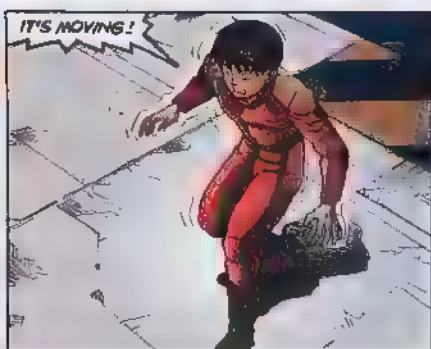
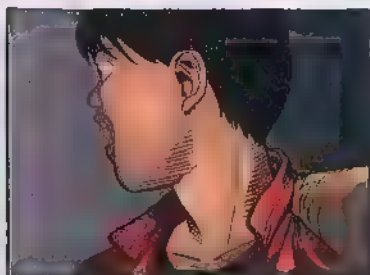
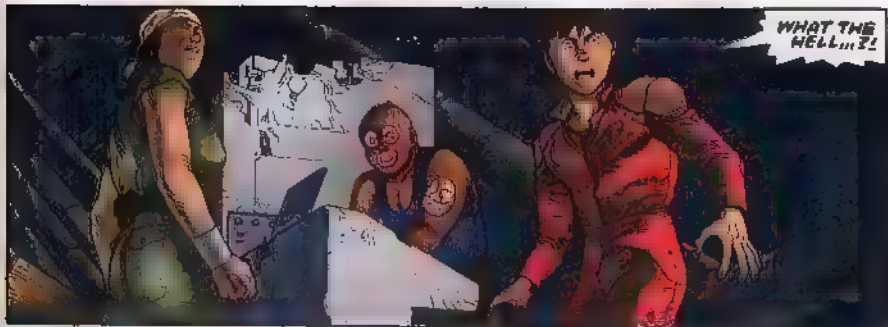


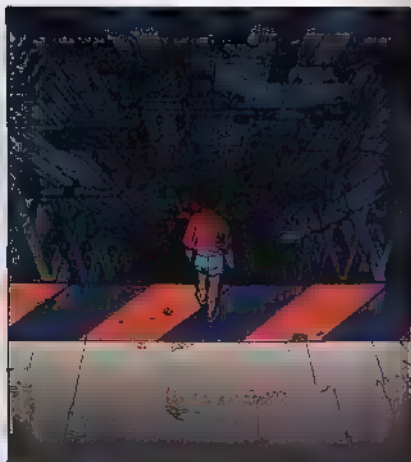
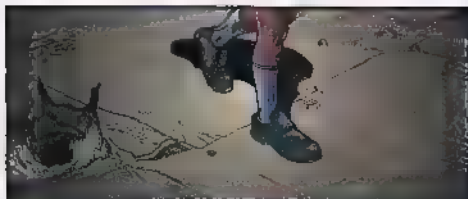
AND NOW YOU'VE
COME TO REAP
WHAT SHE
SOWED!

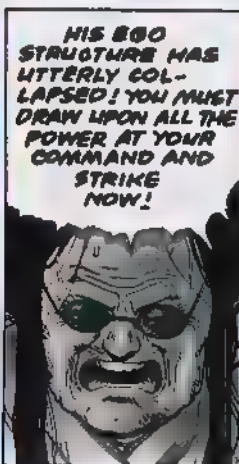
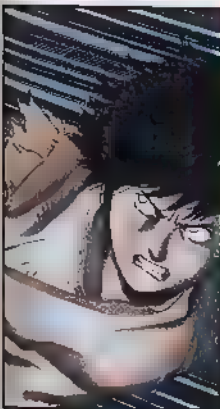


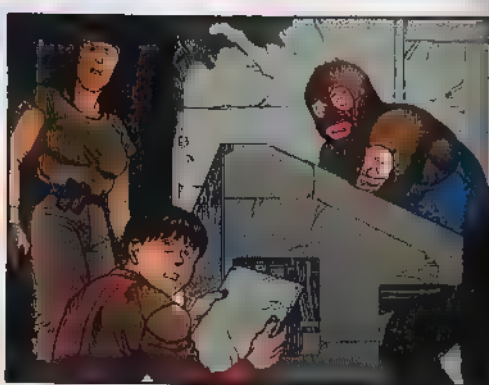
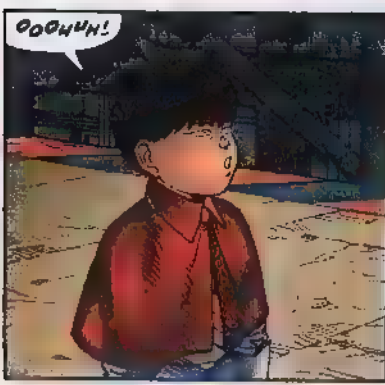


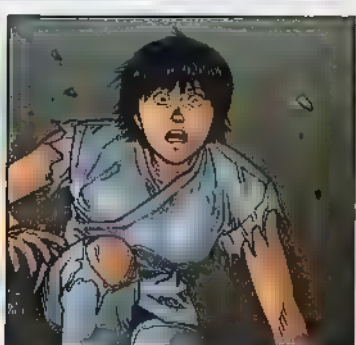
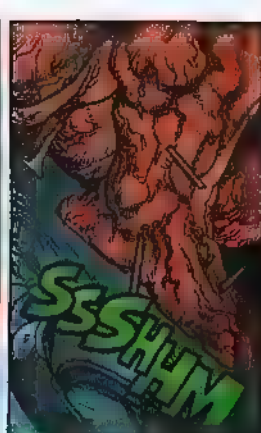


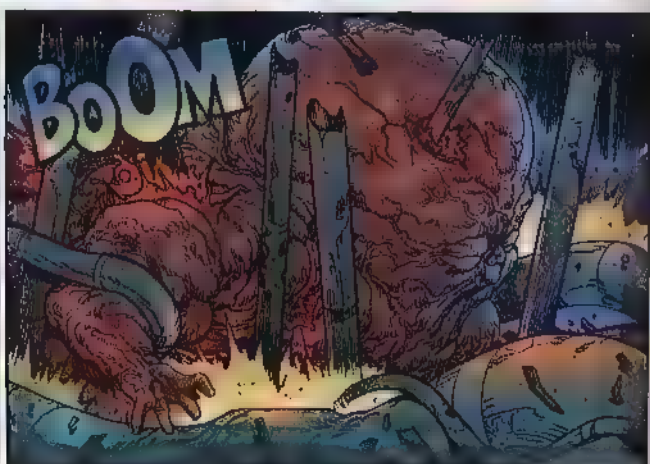
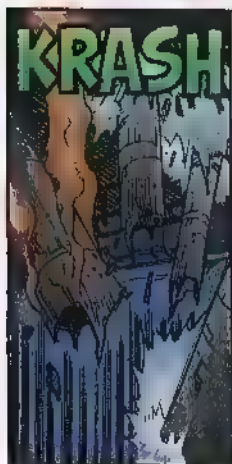
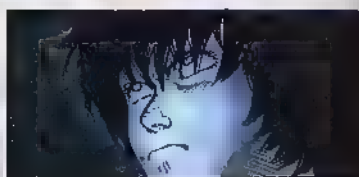
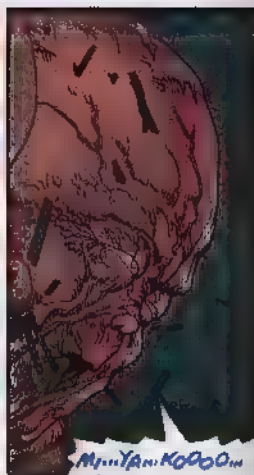
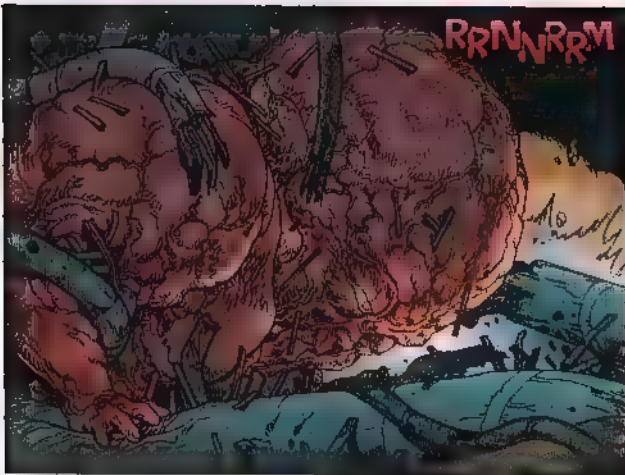


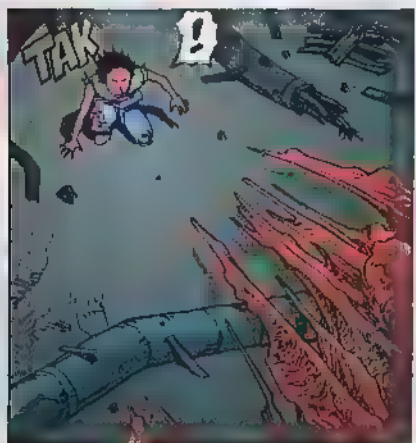
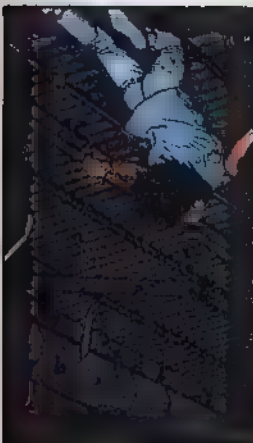
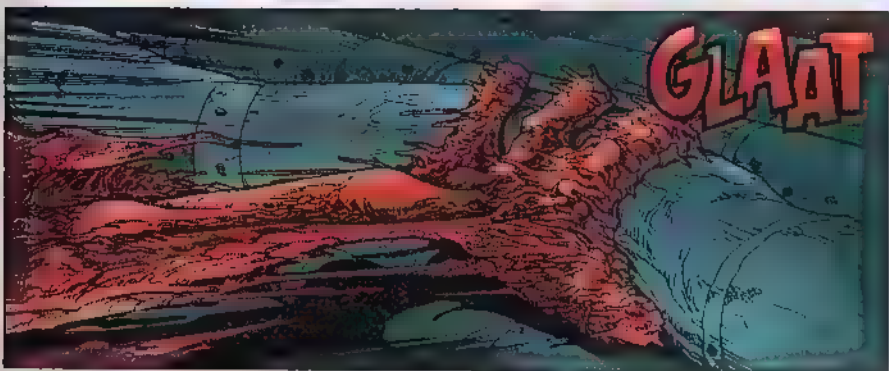
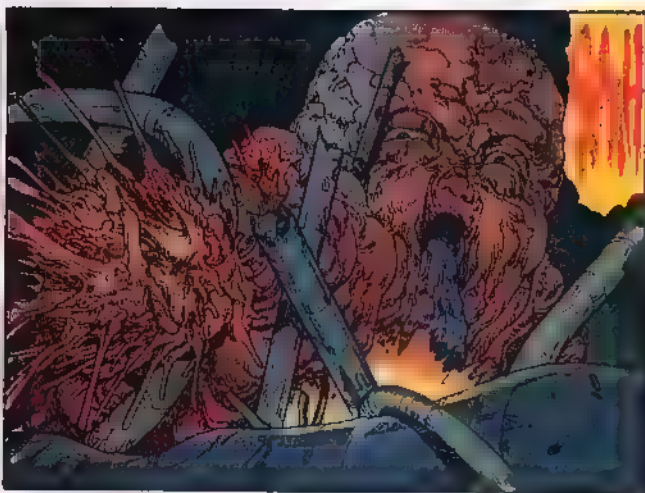




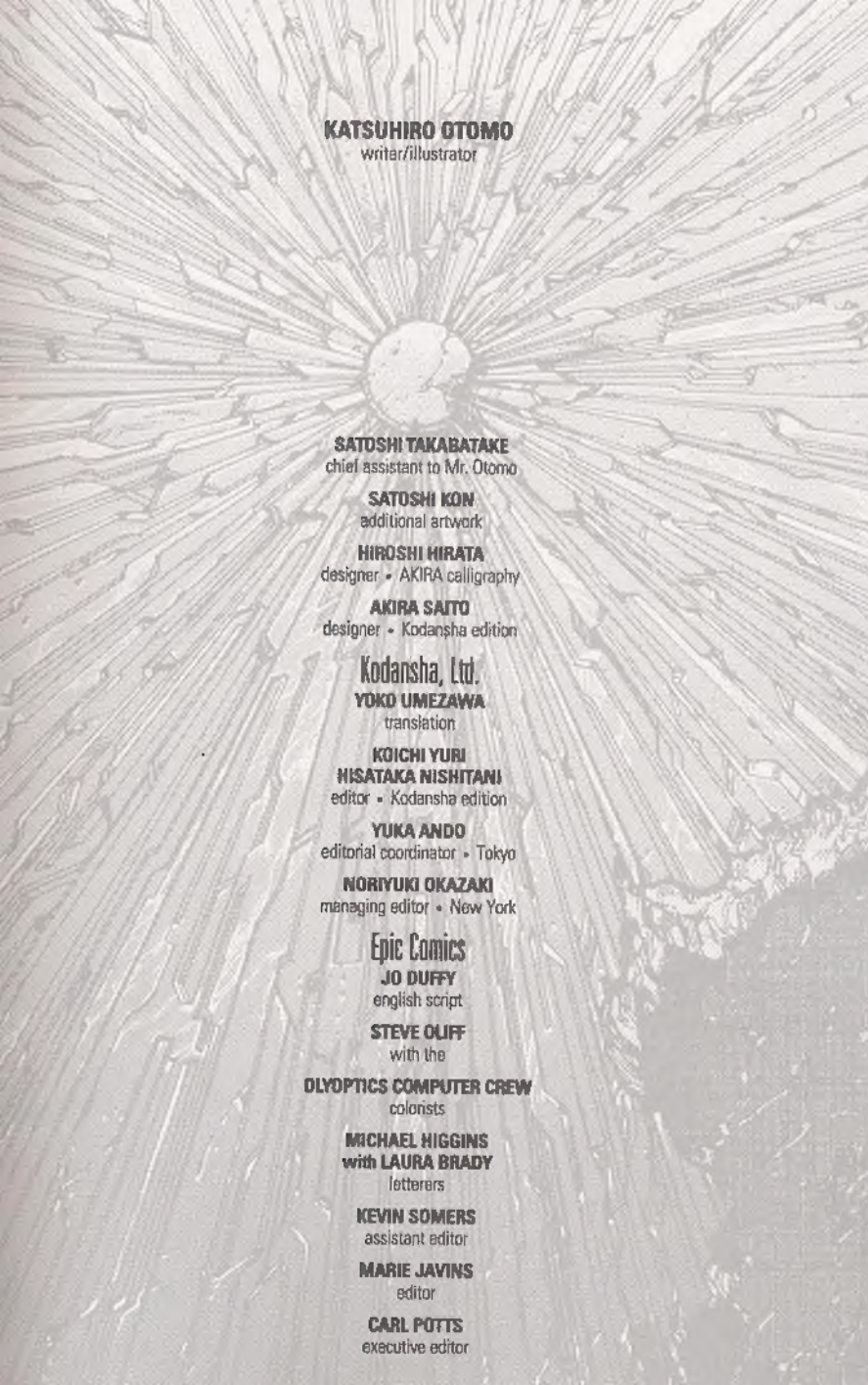












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The wagons have drawn into circles on the rubble strewn plain of Neo-Tokyo, those still surviving forging lines of defense to hold off the furies that rail against them all. Aboard an American warship, fighting men trade ordnance for escape in a desperate attempt to stay alive. Within the weakening ramparts of her temple, Lady Miyako shelters young children holding the secrets of powers older than time. Beneath the city's labyrinthine infrastructure, the berserker named Tetsuo struggles to hold himself together against attacks that tear at his body and soul.

A most terrible siege has set in across this metropolis-turned-battlefield. . .and the walls have started to crumble.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

AKIRA



DIRECT EDITION



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